

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE 2004 CONGRESS-BUNDESTAG/BUNDESRAT EXCHANGE

HON. J. DENNIS HASTERT

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 3, 2004

Mr. HASTERT. Mr. Speaker, since 1983, the U.S. Congress and the German Bundestag and Bundesrat have conducted an annual exchange program for staff members from both countries. The program gives professional staff the opportunity to observe and learn about each other's political institutions and interact on issues of mutual interest.

A staff delegation from the U.S. Congress will be selected to visit Germany from May 16–29 of this year. During this two-week exchange, the delegation will attend meetings with Bundestag/Bundesrat Members, Bundestag and Bundesrat party staff members, and representatives of numerous political, business, academic, and media agencies. Participants also will be hosted by a Bundestag Member during a district visit.

A comparable delegation of German staff members will visit the United States for two weeks in July. They will attend similar meetings here in Washington and visit the districts of Members of Congress. The U.S. delegation is expected to facilitate these meetings.

The Congress-Bundestag/Bundesrat Exchange is highly regarded in Germany and the United States, and is one of several exchange programs sponsored by public and private institutions in the United States and Germany to foster better understanding of the politics and policies of both countries. This exchange is funded by the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs.

The U.S. delegation should consist of experienced and accomplished Hill staff who can contribute to the success of the exchange on both sides of the Atlantic. The Bundestag reciprocates by sending senior staff professionals to the United States.

Applicants should have a demonstrable interest in events in Europe. Applicants need not be working in the field of foreign affairs, although such a background can be helpful. The composite U.S. delegation should exhibit a range of expertise in issues of mutual concern to the United States and Germany such as, but not limited to, trade, security, the environment, economic development, health care, and other social policy issues. This year's delegation should be familiar with transatlantic relations within the context of recent world events.

In addition, U.S. participants are expected to help plan and implement the program for the Bundestag/Bundesrat staff members when they visit the United States. Participants are expected to assist in planning topical meetings in Washington, and are encouraged to host one or two staffers in their Member's district in July, or to arrange for such a visit to another Member's district.

Participants are selected by a committee composed of personnel from the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs of the Department of State and past participants of the exchange.

Senators and Representatives who would like a member of their staff to apply for participation in this year's program should direct them to submit a resume and cover letter in which they state their qualifications, the contributions they can make to a successful program and some assurances of their ability to participate during the time stated.

Applications may be sent to the Office of Interparliamentary Affairs, HB–28, the Capitol, by 5 p.m. on Wednesday, March 31.

TRIBUTE TO THE SLOVENE NATIONAL BENEFIT SOCIETY

HON. MELISSA A. HART

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 3, 2004

Ms. HART. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate the Slovene National Benefit Society (SNPJ) in honor of their 100th anniversary celebration on April 6, 2004. As a U.S. Representative of Western Pennsylvania, I am proud of its rich Slovenian heritage and SNPJ's efforts to preserve it.

The Slovene National Benefit Society was founded on April 6, 1904 to provide affordable life protection to immigrant Slovenian families. Today the Slovene National Benefit Society still provides affordable life insurance to Slovenian immigrants; however, it has grown to include members from all ethnic backgrounds and has developed into a diverse fraternal society which today can boast \$100 million in assets. SNPJ also continues to offer a full package of social, athletic and cultural opportunities, along with college scholarships and community service projects. SNPJ's social and fraternal events provide a way for people from all backgrounds to preserve a culture of a homeland while building new long lasting friendships in America.

I ask my colleagues to join with me in commemorating this fine organization and the members that maintain its excellence. It is my pleasure to recognize that efforts of the Slovene National Benefit Society to preserve the rich Slovenian heritage and foster new friendships in America.

LEAVE NO MISSISSIPPI CHILD BEHIND

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 3, 2004

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I submit the following speech, dated January 7, 2004, given by Joyia Smith, Student

Body President at Greenville-Weston High School in Greenville, MS, at a No Child Left Behind Forum.

The No Child Left Behind Act is a landmark in education reform, "designed" to improve student achievement and change the culture of America's schools. The name alone has we uninformed students thinking that test scores would fly up and there would really be "no child left behind". When this legislation first appeared, I was just an incoming sophomore. Our school individually had a lot of concerns. At the same time NCLB was introduced, our students were trying to adopt an unneeded merger. It was like a "double improvement" for us. Our school administration had us under the impression that we would no longer be "trapped in the dead end of low performing schools". In addition to strong accountability, NCLB puts a special emphasis on implementing educational programs. The whole idea was so parents would know their children's strengths and weaknesses, parents would know how well schools were performing, and parents would know the schools have quality teacher training and resources. This is a good plan. I as a student leader just don't feel it was carried out as it should have been. Everything that seems good is not good for you. We must be able to admit when we've made a mistake and move on. "When dreams turn into dust, you should vacuum." Like Thomas Jefferson, "I too like the dreams of the future better than the history of the past."

I admire Joyia for her attentiveness and the detail in which she expresses her analysis of federal legislation. Her comments truly speak bounds. Her outstanding scholarship is a positive reflection on her personal dedication, family, and school district. May Joyia Smith continue to excel in her endeavors.

RECOGNIZING AND HONORING THE WORK OF THE LEAGUE OF UNITED LATIN AMERICAN CITIZENS ON THEIR 75TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. LORETTA SANCHEZ

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 3, 2004

Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California. Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to join my colleagues in recognizing and honoring the work of the League of United Latin American Citizens, LULAC, on their 75th anniversary.

Serving as the nation's oldest and largest Hispanic organization, LULAC has improved the lives of millions of Latinos across our nation, by never wavering from its commitment to advance "the economic condition, educational attainment, political influence, health and civil rights" of our country's Hispanic population.

During LULAC's early years, they faced great opposition from those who did not wish to see the status and well-being of Hispanics improve. Many members were harassed and

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